

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 92

By Gilmore

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the late Rosa L. Parks  
upon the occasion of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and the  
unveiling of the Rosa Parks Forever Stamp.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pay tribute to those extraordinary individuals who have fought oppression and injustice in all its forms, transformed our community in immeasurable ways, and improved the quality of life for all citizens in this State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, no person is more deserving of this honor than the late Rosa L. Parks, who served and continues to serve as an inspiration to all people who embrace justice, equality, and peace; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a forty-two-year-old seamstress, quietly refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama bus and was arrested for her lonely act of calm defiance; Mrs. Parks thus ignited the modern civil rights movement and inspired freedom-loving people throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Rosa Parks became actively involved in the burgeoning civil rights movement in 1943, when she became Secretary of the Montgomery, Alabama, Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; and

WHEREAS, Rosa Parks's heroic action on December 1, 1955, was the impetus for the formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association, led by the young pastor, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; under Dr. Martin Luther King's inspirational leadership, the Association spearheaded a boycott of the city-owned bus company, which lasted 381 days and fueled a new quest for justice among Americans so long aggrieved; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Parks's righteous cause was brought to the attention of the world after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregated public transportation unconstitutional, thereby setting the stage for the wholesale dismantling of all segregationist laws; and

WHEREAS, in 1957, Rosa Parks and her husband and fellow civil rights activist, Raymond Parks moved to Detroit, Michigan; there Mrs. Parks continued her commitment to society and lifelong public service as a legislative aide to U.S. Congressman John Conyers, Jr., from 1965 until her retirement in 1988; and

WHEREAS, throughout her life, Mrs. Parks fought tirelessly for the civil rights of minorities in this country, and after her husband's death in 1977, Mrs. Parks founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development; based on Mrs. Parks's philosophy of quiet strength, the organization's central mission is to motivate youth to reach their highest potential; and

WHEREAS, for her unparalleled pursuit of justice and equality for humanity, Rosa Parks was awarded the NAACP's highest honor, the Spingarn Medal, in 1979, and in 1980, she was awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Nonviolent Peace Prize; Mrs. Parks received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996, the highest honor the American government bestows upon a civilian, and in 1999, she was presented the Congressional Gold Medal by President Clinton; and

WHEREAS, after her death in 2005, at the venerable age of 92, her casket was placed in the rotunda of the United States Capitol, so that the nation could pay its respects to the acknowledged Mother of the Modern Civil Rights Movement, a woman whose courage in the face of inhumane and discriminatory practices served as a catalyst for improving the lives of so many of her fellow Americans, both black and white; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of her innumerable accomplishments and contributions, the One Hundred Fifth General Assembly renamed certain segments of Metro Center Boulevard and 8th Avenue North in Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County as Rosa L. Parks Boulevard; and

WHEREAS, in further recognition of her profound influence on our Nation's values, the United State Postal Service recently issued a commemorative postage stamp of the American hero, the second in a set of civil rights stamps that began with the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 2013, and that will culminate with the historic march on Washington on its fiftieth anniversary in August; and

WHEREAS, the Rosa Parks Forever Stamp became available to the public on Monday, February 4, 2013, which would have been the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of this incredible figure in American history; and

WHEREAS, as advocates of equality and justice for all citizens, it is fitting that this General Assembly pause in its deliberations to pay tribute to Rosa L. Parks and her many victories on behalf of civil rights on the occasion of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and the unveiling of the Rosa Parks Forever Stamp; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the late Rosa L. Parks upon the occasion of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and the unveiling of the Rosa Parks Forever Stamp, express our sincerest gratitude for her integral role in the civil rights movement, and encourage all Tennesseans to remember this extraordinary woman and her invaluable contributions to the history of our State and Nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.